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Letter dated 17 March 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Upon instructions from my Government, I have the honour to enclose herewith the text of a note verbale dated 13 March 2006 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of Switzerland (United States Interests Section) in Tehran (see annex).

In the recent several months, various senior officials of the United States have used false pretexts to make public and thinly veiled threats of resort to force against the Islamic Republic of Iran in total contempt of international law and fundamental principles of the Charter of the United Nations. The statements delivered at the meeting of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, held in Washington, D.C., from 5 to 7 March 2006, by the Vice-President of the United States and the Permanent Representative to the United Nations, threatening Iran with "tangible and

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painful consequences" and using the phrases "use all the tools at our disposal", "rest assured, though, we are not relying on the Security Council as the only tool in our toolbox to address this problem" and "already beefing up defensive measures", are simply the latest and more vulgar in a series of statements and publications which resort to such unlawful, unacceptable and dangerous threats of use of force. These statements, furthermore, make self-evident the contempt of the United States for the Security Council and other multilateral mechanisms as well as its intention to abuse the very same mechanisms.

Regrettably such dangerous words go beyond callous statements before single-issue constituencies, and include documents officially articulating United States strategy. The list includes the draft "Doctrine of Joint Military Operations" issued by the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff on 15 March 2005 and the "National Security Strategy" issued by the White House on 16 March 2006, both of which defiantly articulate United States policies and intentions on pre-emption, the use of force and resort to nuclear weapons in contravention of international law, the Charter of the United Nations, the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons and other United States multilateral undertakings on negative security assurances.

These statements and documents, in view of past illegal behaviour of the United States, constitute matters of utmost gravity that require an urgent, concerted and resolute response on the part of the United Nations and particularly the Security Council.

It is indeed regrettable that past failures have emboldened senior United States officials and even others to consider as an "option on the table" the threat or use of force, both of which are specifically rejected by Article 2 (4) of the Charter as violations of one of the most fundamental principles of the Organization, the United Nations has a fundamental responsibility to reject these assertions and to arrest this trend.

It would be highly appreciated if this letter and its annex were circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda items 9, 82, 87, 94, 95, 97 and 110, and of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) M. Javad **Zarif**

Annex to the letter dated 17 March 2006 from the Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

Note verbale dated 13 March 2006 from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran addressed to the Embassy of Switzerland (United States Interests Section) in Tehran

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran presents its compliments to the Embassy of Switzerland (United States Interests Section) in Tehran and has the honour to inform the latter that:

According to the news released by various sources, Ambassador John Robert Bolton, the Permanent Representative of the United States of America to the United Nations, has stated on 5 March 2006 that "... Iran's regime must be made aware that if it continues down the path of international isolation, there will be tangible and painful consequences".

He has further repeated these threats in a meeting with the British Members of Parliament visiting the United States early in March 2006 and in violation of the most basic principles of international law and the United Nations Charter, including inter alia the principles on friendly relations and cooperation among nations, has said: "They [the Islamic Republic of Iran] must know everything is on the table and they must understand what that means. We can hit different points along the line. You only have to take out one part of their nuclear operation to take the whole thing down."

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran expresses its strong protest against such threatening statements and emphasizes the necessity for countries to observe their international commitments. It further recalls that such threats are contrary to the principles of the United Nations Charter, particularly paragraph 4 of Article 2 of the Charter, which clearly states that all members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any State. The Islamic Republic of Iran considers the recent statements and threats of the American officials against Iran as a gross violation of the United States international commitments and wishes to convey its strong protest, in this regard, to the United States Government through the Embassy of Switzerland in Tehran.